Introduction of more train from Kanyakumari

1423. SHRI N. DENNIS : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there are proposals under the consideration of the Government to operate more Express trains from Kanyakumari to important cities of the country in view of the increasing number of tourists and pilgrims to the terminal Kanyakumari;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to introduce express trains in the morning from Chennai to Kanyakumari and *vice-versa* at the same time; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) There is no such proposal at present.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Railway Link from Amritsar to Chandigarh

1424. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN LAL BHATIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a railway link from Amritsar to Chandigarh via Ludhiana is under consideration of the Government; and

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be taken up?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) Construction of a new line from Ludhiana to Chandigarh is included in Budget 1997-98, to be taken up after obtaining the necessary clearances for which action has been initiated. This will provide a direct rail link from Amritsar to Chandigarh.

Land Reforms

1425. SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether a State level conference was held in the recent past to review the progress of land reforms in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the outcome therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KINJARAPPU YERRANNAIDU) : (a) Conferences of State/UTs, are held periodically to review the progress of land reforms in the country.

(b) The last Conference of the Revenue Ministers was held in New Delhi on 28th January, 1997 which deliberated upon important issues on land reform measures incluidng the distribution of ceiling surplus land/Bhoodan land/Government Wasteland, restoration of Alienated tribal land, tenancy reforms, the involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions in land reforms etc. and recommended a set of specific time-bound measures.

These have been taken up with the concerned State Governments for necessary follow up action.

Telecom Service-National Average

1426. SHRI ANANT KUMAR HEGDE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether telecommunications services are below the national average in some States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any scheme under consideration of the Government to bring the telecommunications services in those States at par with national average;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The average number of telephones per hundred inhabitants in some of the States is less than the national average of 1.72. Steps are being taken to bring the tele density of these States at the national level by giving more weightage while fixing the targets for new telephone connections. Circle-wise targets fixed for 1997-98, waiting list as well as tele-density as on 31.3.1997 are as per details in enclosed Statement.

(e) Does not arise in view of above.

Statement

DELs target 1997-98, Waiting List and Tele-density as on 31.03.97, based on 1991 Census.

S. No.	Circle	DELs Target	Waiting List as on 31.3.97	Tele-density per 100 population
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	215000	242592	1.43
2.	Assam	35000	28422	0.56
3.	Bihar	60000	51445	0.39
4.	Gujarat	200000	265681	2.60
5.	Haryana	73000	85459	2.18
6.	H.P.	40000	46762	2.77
7.	J & K	20000	33141	0.89
8.	Karnataka	195000	165396	2.17